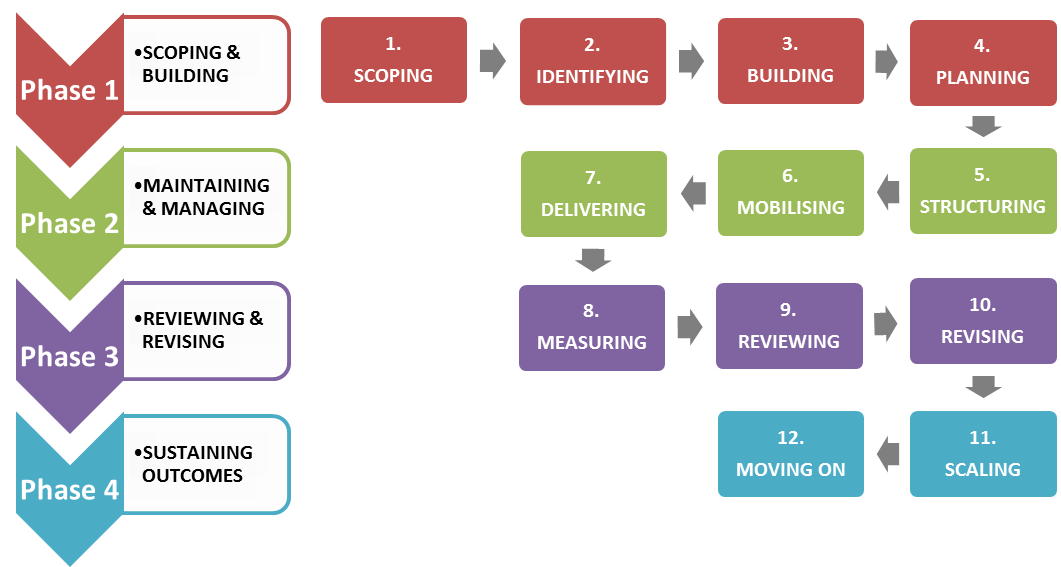
**BUILDING EFFECTIVE PARTNERSHIPS FOR DEVELOPMENT**

**HAND-OUT 1: Explanation of steps in the Partnering Cycle[[1]](#footnote-1)**

**The Partnering Cycle**



**Based on: Tennyson, R. (2011), *The Partnering Toolbook* (4th ed). London, UK: The Partnering Initiative (IBLF).**

1. Scoping

* Identify in broad terms the issue(s) or challenge(s) to be addressed.
* Consider any available non-partnering alternatives that may be adopted to tackle the issue.
* If a partnering approach seems the only or the best way forward, build a clear rationale to persuade others.
* Have some initial ideas about the range and types of projects that the partnership may undertake, to use as a basis for discussion with potential partners.
* Consider the possible contributions of different sectors – based on their likely interests and motivations.

1. Identifying

* Find examples and evidence of where a partnering approach has worked effectively in similar circumstances to share with your potential partners.
* Seek out a wide range of possible partner organisations.
* Make initial contact with potential partner organisations – on a ‘no commitment’ basis – to explore the idea.
* Draw up a list of preferred partners and check out their suitability in more detail – and don’t forget to let them check out your organisation’s suitability also. This should be a two-way process.

1. Building
   * Create opportunities for getting to know more about each of the organisations (site visits, presentations).
   * Explain the key principles for partnering and ensure that partners understand their implications and agree to abide by them.
   * Co-create and record an agreed definition of what the partners mean by the term ‘partnership’.
   * Co-create some ‘ground rules’ to support considerate behaviour between the partners.
2. Planning

* Move the partners from a broad agreement about the key issue(s) to be addressed by the partnership to more precise definition of focus areas, actual projects and specific goals – this process will reveal potential partners who are not at the table.
* Agree as a group what the hoped-for outcomes from the partnership’s activities are and how the achievement of these outcomes will be measured and assessed.
* Brainstorm to explore the range of specific activities and projects that should be developed to achieve the hoped-for outcomes – being realistic as well as ambitious.
* Undertake a resource mapping exercise to assess what resources are needed and what each of the

partners is able and willing to contribute – knowledge & expertise, competencies, equipment, products, networks & relationships, influence, labour as well as cash.

1. Structuring

* Ensure the partnership is embedded in each partner organization and not over-reliant on a few individuals.
* Agree which types of decision can be taken by individuals on behalf of the partnership and which must be agreed in advance with all partners.
* Build systems through which partners can be accountable to each other (in addition to their internal organizational accountability) and address any actual or potential conflicts of interest.
* Maintain regular communications between partners and between the partnership and other stakeholders.

1. Mobilising

* Confirm in writing exactly what resources have been pledged and when they will be delivered including the time commitment of each partner representative.
* Support partners in persuading their organisations to honour their commitments.
* Set up a system for recording contributions and the uses to which they are put so that partners can report back to their colleagues and managers.
* Widen the engagement of other stakeholders, including those that may be able to contribute extra resources.

1. Delivering

* Allocate clearly (and fairly) roles and responsibilities for project delivery.
* Track activities and fulfilment of agreed commitment and timetable.
* Celebrate project successes with all those involved to maintain enthusiasm and engagement.
* Continue to keep partners and other agreed stakeholders informed of progress.

1. Measuring

* Agree/confirm success indicators with partners – were the original ones correct, should new ones be added?
* Monitor compliance – are partners doing what they promised within the agreed timescale?
* Put in place arrangements for reviewing the project – what changes to implementation are necessary?
* Keep track of deliverables, outputs and impact – are the activities achieving targets and goals?

1. Reviewing

Use a regular review process to:

* take stock of the efficiency and effectiveness of the partnership;
* help partners to assess the value of the partnership to their own organisations and constituencies;
* record any unexpected benefits or outcomes from the partnership;
* consider whether there are new opportunities for the partnership, where it might go next and what might need to change to enable these next steps to be taken.

1. Revising

* Agree as a group what needs to be changed.
* Develop a timetable and change management process, allocating tasks between the partners.
* Make the agreed changes (which could include dropping some partners and bringing in new ones).
* Re-define the partnership and re-write the partnering agreement if necessary.
* Communicate changes as required.

1. Scaling

There are various options, including:

* expanding the established projects;
* publicising the projects – using the media or partner networks and communication channels;
* writing up the partnership’s story and making it available to others.

1. Moving On

There are various options, including:

* concluding the partnership – with partners free to work with new partners on other projects;
* handing over the current project(s) and continuing to work together as a partnership on new projects;
* establishing the partnership as a new mechanism/institution with its own independent strategy/structure.

1. Source: Tennyson, R., Huq, N. & Pyres, J. (2009). *Partnering Step by Step*. London, UK: The Partnering Initiative (IBLF). [↑](#footnote-ref-1)